

Message Text

SECRET

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14

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 AID-20

IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 OMB-01

RSR-01 /108 W

----- 022318

R 100605 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2107

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T SANAA 791

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SA, YE, YS

SUBJ: CALL ON SAG MINSTATE SAQQAF

1. I PAID CALL MAY 8 ON VISITING SAG MINSTATE FOR FONAFF SAQQAF. (HE DEPARTED MORNING MAY 9 AT END OF THREE DAY VISIT).
2. SAQQAF TOLD ME HE MOST PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF VISIT. HE SAID PRESENT YARG UNDER PRESIDENT IRYANI IS BEST POSSIBLE ONE FOR COUNTRY. ALTHOUGH HE FOUND IT SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO WORK WITH YAR LEADERS, WHO FREQUENTLY FACE INTERNAL PROBLEMS, HE HAD FOUND THEM MOST COOPERATIVE, SPEAKING FRANKLY WITH " COURAGE AND HEART". HE AGREED ENTIRELY WITH TOP PRIORITY THEY GAVE TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.
3. SAG, SAQQAF SAID, WAS DETERMined TO BE GENEROUS TO YARG. HE NOTED SAG HAD UNPUBLISHED BUT WRITTEN AGREEMENT TO INCREASE PROJECT ASSISTANCE AFTER FIRST SR 72 MILLION, GRANTED IN 1972, WAS SPENT. AS YET, HOWEVER, YARG AND SAG AID OFFICE IN SANAA HAD BEEN ABLE TO SPEND ONLY SR 20 MILLION OF THIS SUM.

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4. ALTHOUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAD TOP PRIORITY, SAG ALSO RECOGNIZED NEED TO STRENGTHEN YARG MILITARILY. GEN. QABBANI' S VISIT HAD BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL. HE NOW HAD A LIST OF YARG MILITARY NEEDS. SAG WOULD STUDY IT, COST IT, AND THEN AGREE WITH YARG ON APPROPRIATELY TRIMMED LONG- TERM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, WITH DUE REGARD NOT JUST TO COST OF EQUIPMENT, BUT ANCILLARY COSTS OF TRAINING, SUPPLY, AND MAINTENANCE. SAG WOULD ALSO RESPOND TO SHORT- TERM NEEDS. TWO SHIPMENTS, ONE TANKS AND ONE UNSPECIFIED, HAD ALREADY ARRIVED. HE AGREED WITH MY COMMENT THAT SAG RESPONSIVENESS HAD IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICAL AS WELL AS MILITARY IMPACT IN REASSURING YARG THAT IT CAN COUNT ON ITS FRIENDS . I ASSURED SAQQAF OF IMPORTANCE USG PLACES ON SAFE- GUARDING ARABIAN PENINSULA, EXEMPLIFIED BY OUR CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH SAG IN JIDDA AND SANAA, AS WELL OUR EFFORTS PROMOTE REGIONAL COOPERATION AMONG RED SEA AND PENINSULA STATES.

5. SAQQAF TOOK INTERESTING LINE THAT WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON STRENGTHENING YAR AND OMAN, LEAVING PDRY ALONE TO COLLAPSE OF ITS OWN INTERNAL PROBLEMS. PROOF OF ITS WEAKNESS AND LACK OF DOMESTIC SUPPORT WAS USE OF COMMUNIST " MERCENARIES", A HISTORICAL THROWBACK WHICH HAD NOT BEEN USED IN MIDDLE EAST SINCE FAROUK' S EGYPT. EFFORT TO OVERTHROW PDRY WOULD ONLY LEAD TO GREATER SOVIET INVOLVEMENT.

6. REALIZE THAT SAQQAF' S SOPHISTICATED DIPLOMATIC VIEWS ARE NOT ENTIRE SAG POLICY TOWARDS PDRY AND YAR. I WAS MOST ENCOURAGED, HOWEVER, BY HIS POSITIVE AND WARM WORDS FOR PRESENT YARG AND HIS STRESS ON SAG ASSISTANCE TO IT.
CRAWFORD

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SANAA00791
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SANAA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730541/aaaaitqr.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 980127
Subject: CALL ON SAG MINSTATE SAQQAF
TAGS: MASS, SA, YE, YS
To: JIDDA
LONDON
NEA
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005